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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

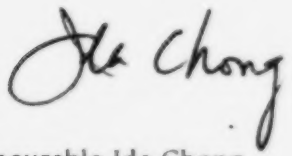
It is my pleasure to deliver the service plan for the Ministry of Community Services. This service plan provides me with the opportunity to articulate the goals and actions that the ministry will be undertaking to achieve our vision that "British Columbia's communities are great places in which to live," and that support the Government of British Columbia's Five Great Goals.

Our mandate is to promote sustainable and liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians. We are proud of our successes to date. British Columbia's implementation of the *Community Charter* has created the most enabling framework for local governments in Canada. The Vancouver Agreement, renewed in 2005, brings forward socio-economic benefits for some of the most vulnerable residents of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The ministry's work in this area has led to increased collaboration with the federal government, across provincial ministries and agencies, and with local governments. There are a number of cities that have expressed interest in the Urban Development Agreement process and we look forward to working with them this year.

We are working with the Union of BC Municipalities to implement the New Deal for Cities and Communities gas tax transfer program, a $635 million (over 5 years) federally-funded program which supports a range of environmental objectives. This past year we increased funding for domestic violence prevention and intervention services for women and their children by $12.5 million, the most significant increase in over a decade. The Ministry of Community Services also provides secretariat support to the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues, whose mandate is to examine two key issues: how to support seniors' ability to continue as contributing members of society, and how to support seniors' independence and health. I look forward to receiving the recommendations the council will make to government in late 2006.

This service plan reflects an increased emphasis on improving regional governance and enhancing municipal cooperation. Working with, and across, government ministries we will promote and foster effective linkages and working relationships to ensure that seniors' and women's issues are highlighted and considered in public policy and program design. I am committed to encouraging women to enter some of the less traditional fields of employment, such as trades and the construction industry, through our mentoring program.

The Ministry of Community Services 2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the Plan has been prepared. All material fiscal assumptions and policy decisions as of February 14, 2006, have been considered in preparing the service plan and I am accountable for achieving the specific objectives in the plan.



Honourable Ida Chong
Minister of Community Services
and Minister Responsible for
Seniors' and Women's Issues

February 21, 2006

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Ministry Overview

Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Community Services' mandate is to promote sustainable, liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians. It works in partnership with other ministries, local and federal governments, the private sector, and not-for-profit organizations to develop policy and deliver programs and services regarding local government, seniors', women's and community issues. Through its expert knowledge, understanding of communities, and close relationships with local governments, the ministry plays a leadership role in ensuring that: communities are able to meet their citizens' needs, plan and prepare for sustainable development, and address issues affecting their social, economic, and environmental well-being. The ministry strives to ensure that the unique needs of women are addressed and integrated into public policy, legislation, programs, and services by: identifying and communicating emerging trends and key issues affecting women to government and the public, and by informing policy development, program direction, and decision-making that affects women. The ministry also builds relationships and collaborates with and informs other ministries, local, provincial, and federal governments, stakeholders, and community groups about issues affecting seniors.

The ministry has three core business areas: local government; seniors', women's and community services; and executive and support services (see Appendix I for the ministry organization chart). It is also responsible for municipal services in the University Endowment Lands. The ministry administers all or parts of 19 pieces of legislation (see Appendix II), has responsibility for the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues and the Premier's Task Force on Community Opportunities, and appoints persons to the Islands Trust Fund Board and the Municipal Insurance Association of British Columbia (see Appendix I).

The ministry works to achieve its goals and objectives through the following core activities:

- providing the legislative, policy, and governance framework for local governments;
- funding third party service providers to deliver client-centred intervention and prevention services to women and their children who are leaving, or are affected by, abusive relationships;
- coordinating resources and providing leadership to address issues in inner-cities and communities in transition;
- working with federal and local governments, other ministries, and community organizations to ensure that the unique needs of women and seniors are addressed and integrated into public policy, legislation, programs, and services; and
- building relationships with other ministries, staff, clients, and stakeholders.

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

British Columbia's communities are great places in which to live.

Mission

To promote sustainable, liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians.

Values

The ministry is guided by the following values in conducting its work:

Cooperation — promoting teamwork, and building relationships and partnerships of mutual trust, confidence, and respect.

Professionalism and Integrity — conducting respectful, honest, and ethical behaviour in all its communications and actions.

Client-centred — providing high levels of service to ministry clients and the public, in a timely and effective manner that demonstrates the ministry's commitment to service.

Accountability — providing services efficiently, implementing sound financial management, and being accountable to government and the public for the results identified in its service plan.

Innovation and Creativity — championing a culture of learning, innovation, and creativity within all levels of the organization.

Strategic Context

The Ministry of Community Services plays a central role in supporting the health, safety and liveability of British Columbia's communities. It works with a wide range of partners in government, the private sector, and the not-for-profit sector to enhance the social and economic well-being of communities — recognizing their diversity in terms of size, capacity, needs, and complexity. British Columbia's 157 municipalities and 27 regional districts serve populations ranging in size from 230 to over two million.[1]

In addition to supporting communities, the ministry has a specific mandate to influence policy development and coordinate government responses in areas related to women's and seniors' issues. Women and seniors make up 51 per cent and 13.3[2] per cent of the province's population respectively.

The following section identifies the key opportunities and challenges that will affect the ministry's planning for the next three years.

Key Challenges

Growth Pressures Urbanization is increasing as the population continues to shift from rural to urban areas. Eighty-seven per cent of British Columbia's population lives in a municipality, while thirteen per cent of the population lives in non-municipal territory.[3] Most of British Columbia's urban population lives in an area covering less than 3 per cent of the entire province. This creates pressure for more and better quality infrastructure, such as systems to provide clean drinking water, and affordable and appropriate waste water treatment. Infrastructure renewal can, in turn, create financial pressures for local governments which traditionally rely on the relatively narrow financial base of property taxes and user fees. The ministry will continue to work with local governments, the federal government and other ministries to address these challenges.

Communities in Transition Many rural communities that have traditionally depended on natural resource industries are working to strengthen and diversify their economies, and to plan for sustainable futures in the face of issues such as the ongoing softwood lumber dispute, the mountain pine beetle infestation, and the challenges of resource renewal. In situations where the industry has closed in a community, the ministry will continue to work with local governments and provincial agencies to provide expertise and other supports, where appropriate, during the economic transition.

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[1] BC Stats, *BC Regional Districts and Municipal Population Estimates, 1996 – 2005*, Dec. 2005.

[2] Statistics Canada, *Population by Age and Sex*, CANSIM Retrieval Table from 051-0001, 2005.

[3] BC Stats, *BC Municipal Population Estimates, 1996 – 2005*, Dec. 2005.

Inner-Cities Inner-cities have higher rates of unemployment, crime, drug use, prostitution, and homelessness than cities overall. For example, violent crimes in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver were three times the level of the City of Vancouver, on average, over the period from 1996 to 2002.[4] The issues of inner-cities can be particularly challenging as, in most cases, they have taken decades to become established. Responses must be coordinated across a variety of agencies and governments, and inner-city residents must be supported to participate effectively in solutions for their neighbourhoods. The ministry supports communities interested in Urban Development Agreements as one way of addressing these challenges.

An Aging Population By 2031, the proportion of seniors in British Columbia's population is expected to rise from the current 13.3 per cent to nearly 25 per cent,[5] highlighting the need for appropriate health, housing, transportation, and other community services. As the lead provincial agency responsible for seniors' issues, the ministry will be challenged to coordinate responses that meet the needs of an aging population, and to ensure that provincially-based services and information are accessible in communities.

Domestic Violence Against Women Many women who experience domestic violence need support to leave abusive situations and re-build their lives, with timely connections to emergency shelter, counselling, housing, and employment opportunities. As the lead provincial agency responsible for women's issues, the ministry will continue to fund key services, such as transition houses, counselling and outreach programs as well as prevention initiatives. The economic costs of violence against women are difficult to gauge. However, two Canadian studies have placed the figure in the range of $1.5 billion to $4.2 billion per year in Canada,[6] and the human costs are incalculable.

Key Opportunities

Innovative Approaches to Addressing Community Issues The ministry has significant experience establishing cooperative relationships with local and federal governments, ministries, First Nations, and communities. This experience will be a key asset in facilitating cooperative approaches to the complex issues facing communities. Intergovernmental forums (such as the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors, and Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women) and partnerships with local and federal governments, First Nations, as well as the Union of BC Municipalities, will provide new opportunities to achieve common goals.

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[4] Vancouver Agreement, *A Profile of Health and Well-being in the Downtown Eastside (1996–2001)*, 2004.

[5] BC Stats, *Population Aged 65 and Over by Health Service Delivery Areas, Seniors Scan*, 2005.

[6] Day, T., Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children, *The Health-Related Costs of Violence Against Women in Canada*, p. 34, 1995; Greaves, L. *et. al.*, Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children, *Selected Estimates of the Costs of Violence Against Women and Children*, p. 7, 1995.

New Deal for Cities and Communities In April 2005, British Columbia became the first province to sign an agreement with the federal government to transfer gas tax revenues to cities and communities. The New Deal for Cities and Communities gives British Columbia $635 million over five years to support environmentally sustainable local infrastructure. The ministry will work in partnership with the Union of BC Municipalities to direct the new resources to support environmental objectives through improved transit, cleaner drinking water, improved waste water infrastructure, and improved air quality.

Strong and Flexible Local Governments The legislative framework, financial organization, and tradition of local decision-making for local governments in British Columbia create a solid basis for addressing challenges posed by growth, infrastructure renewal, and other changing local and regional conditions. The flexibility of local government structures, and the strength of partners such as the Union of BC Municipalities and the Municipal Finance Authority, are key assets.

New Urban Development Agreements Urban Development Agreements are intended to address inner-city issues and contribute to healthy and safe inner-cities by coordinating the work of local, provincial, and federal governments, and community agencies, to address social, health, and economic issues. An example is the Vancouver Agreement, which is a tri-partite agreement among the governments of Canada, British Columbia and the City of Vancouver. It was first signed in 2000 and then renewed for another five-year term in 2005. A number of other communities have indicated an interest in pursuing Urban Development Agreements, opening up new opportunities for sustainable development and improved well-being for residents of their inner-cities.

Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues The mandate of the council is framed by the emergence, for the first time in our society, of the vast numbers of healthy, capable older people who have largely retired from the paid workforce, yet continue to be healthy and independent. The council will examine the implications of the demographic change that is emerging, since 25 years from now, approximately one in four British Columbians will be 65 and older. The Council will review the demographic and socio-economic changes, projecting an outlook to 2020, and identify pressing needs and opportunities to improve seniors' independence and quality of living, including: healthy lifestyles and nutrition, housing options and community programs, seniors' services, and mandatory retirement. The Council is scheduled to make recommendations to the Premier by November 30, 2006. The ministry is the lead agency responsible for supporting the work of the Premier's Council and coordinating government's response to its recommendations.

Women's Participation in the Economy Women comprise 51 per cent of British Columbia's population, 56 per cent of current university enrollment[7] and 47 per cent of the paid workforce[8]. However, despite recent gains, women's weekly wage rate is still on average

[7] Ministry of Advanced Education, *Post-Secondary Central Data Warehouse Standards Reports*, November 2004.

[8] Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Survey Extract from File Cd3T01an.ivt*, 2004.

only 81 per cent of men's weekly wage rate (full-time employees).[9] The ministry is developing a number of mentoring initiatives to foster new opportunities for women to participate in the province's paid workforce.

World Urban Forum Vancouver will host the United Nations World Urban Forum on urban sustainability in June 2006, with up to 10,000 participants from around the world expected. This international event will provide an opportunity to learn from other jurisdictions and to showcase British Columbia's leadership in sustainability.

Capacity to Manage Risks

The ministry can draw on many strengths to manage risks. These include:

- expert staff with a broad range of skills and experience;
- the ability to manage and adapt to change, and the flexibility to meet new challenges;
- experience using innovative approaches to leverage resources;
- strong client and stakeholder relationships; and
- experience in building partnerships and cooperative relationships with local and federal governments, First Nations, and with communities.

[9] Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Survey, extract from file Cd3T01an.ivt*, 2004.

Core Business Areas

1. Local Government

The local government core business area is resourced by the Local Government Department and comprises four program areas: the Governance and Structure Division; Infrastructure and Finance Division; Intergovernmental Relations and Planning Division; and Local Government Policy and Research Branch.

Through this core business area, the ministry:

- provides the provincial legislative, regulatory, and policy frameworks that enable local governments to address community needs;
- manages water and sewer infrastructure capital funding and infrastructure planning;
- works with local governments to develop forward-looking regional strategies;
- assists local governments with incorporations, amalgamations, and boundary extensions;
- fosters cooperation among the federal, provincial, and local governments; and
- facilitates productive relationships among local governments, provincial agencies, and First Nations.

The Local Government Department is also responsible for municipal services in the University Endowment Lands.

Much of the work in this core area relies on building and fostering partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders. The Local Government Department has a budget of $181.0 million for 2006/07, with a staff of 91 full-time equivalents.

2. Seniors', Women's and Community Services

The seniors', women's and community services core business area is resourced by the Seniors', Women's and Community Services Department. The department comprises four policy/program areas: Seniors' and Women's Policy Branch; Stopping the Violence Branch; the Inner-City Partnerships Branch; and Community Transition.

Under this core business area, the ministry is responsible for leadership on issues related to seniors, women, inner-city issues and communities in transition. It contributes to community health and safety by funding third party service providers to deliver transition house programs for women and their children affected by domestic violence; counselling programs for women who have experienced domestic violence and children who have witnessed abuse; and public education and partnership initiatives that aim to eliminate violence against women. The ministry also provides policy analysis, research, and information to government and the public on seniors' and women's issues.

Through this core business area, the ministry supports revitalization in inner-city communities through public, private and community partnerships. Responsibilities include: coordinating resources and providing leadership to create economic and social development opportunities in inner-cities; supporting the implementation of the 2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitments;[10] and funding the BladeRunners youth employment program. This business area also leads and coordinates the provincial government's work to address issues facing communities in transition.

The seniors', women's and community services core business area has a budget of $52.4 million for 2006/07, with a staff of 37 full-time equivalents.

3. Executive and Support Services

The executive and support services core business area is composed of the Management Services Department and the offices of the Minister and Deputy Minister. The Management Services Department supports programs in the Ministry of Community Services and the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts by supplying services such as:

- corporate policy and planning;
- legislation, regulation, and regulatory reform;
- facilities and administrative services;
- financial services;
- information, privacy, records management, and the intranet;
- information systems; and
- strategic human resources.

The executive and support services core business area has a budget of $7.8 million for 2006/07, with a staff of 70 full-time equivalents.

[10] The 2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitments arose from the 2010 Bid Corporation and its Member Partners' mutual vision to create legacies for all British Columbians. The guarantee section of the 2010 Bid Book, the Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement, contains 37 goals centering on employment, economic development, housing, recreation, and culture to ensure the interests of those living in Vancouver's inner-city neighbourhoods are addressed.

Resource Summary

Core Business Areas	2005/06 Restated Estimates[1]	2006/07 Estimates	2007/08 Plan	2008/09 Plan
Operating Expenses ($000)				
Local Government	177,065	181,044	165,144	172,544
Seniors', Women's and Community Services	51,722	52,435	51,934	51,934
Executive and Support Services	7,963	7,784	7,784	7,784
Total	**236,750**	**241,263**	**224,862**	**232,262**
Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)				
Local Government	85	91	91	91
Seniors', Women's and Community Services	34	37	35	35
Executive and Support Services	71	70	70	70
Total	**190**	**198**	**196**	**196**
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)				
Local Government	800	700	700	700
Seniors', Women's and Community Services	1,250	700	700	700
Executive and Support Services	300	580	580	580
Total	**2,350**	**1,980**	**1,980**	**1,980**

[1] These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with the presentation of the 2006/07 *Estimates*. Schedule A of the *Estimates* presents a detailed reconciliation.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Results

Overview

Ministry Goals

1. Community governance is open, effective and accountable to its citizens.
2. British Columbians live in resilient, sustainable communities.
3. Communities effectively meet the social and economic needs of their citizens.
4. Women are safe from domestic violence.
5. Women have the opportunity to reach their economic potential.
6. Improved social and economic well-being for seniors.

Linkage to the Five Great Goals for a Golden Decade

The Provincial Government's five Great Goals for a Golden Decade are:

1. Make British Columbia the best educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent.
2. Lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness.
3. Build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, special needs, children at risk, and seniors.
4. Lead the world in sustainable environmental management, with the best air and water quality, and the best fisheries management — bar none.
5. Create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.

The Ministry of Community Services contributes most significantly to the Government's goal to lead the world in sustainable environmental management. The ministry is working with the Union of BC Municipalities to implement the New Deal for Cities and Communities, which provides $635 million in federal gas tax transfers, over five years, to communities throughout the province. The program will support environmental objectives through infrastructure investments which support cleaner drinking water, cleaner air, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The ministry also supports urban planning, including regional growth strategies and infrastructure grants for water and sewers, to ensure that communities have the capacity to grow in ways that are environmentally sustainable.

The ministry has a number of programs and initiatives that support the goal of building the best system of support for persons with disabilities, special needs, children at risk, and seniors. The ministry is responsible for domestic violence prevention and intervention services which include: transition houses and safe homes, community-based prevention projects, and counselling programs for women and their children who have experienced domestic violence. The ministry also supports the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors'

Issues, which will make recommendations in late 2006 on the types of supports and services seniors need to continue being active, healthy participants in society.

Finally, the ministry is interested in assisting communities to develop new Urban Development Agreements to coordinate the work of the federal, provincial, and local governments to create healthy, safe, and sustainable inner-cities. This contributes to the Government's goal of creating more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada. The BladeRunners program, a ministry-funded program that gives at-risk youth the opportunity to enter the construction industry, also directly supports great goal five, as do the ministry's mentoring program and strategies to support communities in transition.

Cross Ministry Initiatives

The Ministry of Community Services plays a supporting role with regard to the following cross ministry priorities and action plans:

2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games

- The ministry is engaged with partner ministries to contribute to the implementation of the 2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitments, which are intended to maximize opportunities and mitigate potential impacts of the Olympics on Vancouver's inner-city neighbourhoods. There are 37 commitments relating to employment, economic development, housing, recreation, and culture.
- The BladeRunners program is consistent with the Inner-City Inclusive Commitments. It gives at-risk youth the opportunity to enter the construction industry.

Crystal Meth

- The ministry has provided $2 million to the Union of BC Municipalities to help address the issue of crystal meth at the community level. It also supports the inter-ministry committee on crystal meth.

StrongStart (Children's Agenda)

- The ministry supports the Government's Children's Agenda through its counselling program for children who witness abuse. This program has an annual budget of $4.6 million, and provides almost 2,000 counselling or support sessions to children and their caregivers each year.

First Nations

- The Local Government-First Nations Relations Program actively supports and facilitates the development of constructive relationships between local governments and First Nations, through such initiatives as the Joint UBCM/First Nations Summit Community-to-Community Forum.

- The ministry also supports violence prevention initiatives for Aboriginal women. For example, it provides funding to several Aboriginal women's organizations to address health and safety issues. It also funds a sexual assault centre for Aboriginal women.
- On average, 82 per cent of the participants in the BladeRunners program, which assists at-risk youth to enter the construction trades, are of Aboriginal descent.

Mountain Pine Beetle

- Through its Community Transition Program, the ministry works with local governments and provincial agencies to provide expertise and support to rural and resource communities in transition. It will be actively involved in supporting communities as they adjust to the impact of the mountain pine beetle infestation.

Asia-Pacific Strategy

- The ministry will support the Government's work to build closer ties with Asia-Pacific nations, by developing sister-city relationships between communities in British Columbia and those in India and China.

Regulatory Reform

- See Related Planning Processes (page 30).

Performance Plan

Goal 1: *Community governance is open, effective and accountable to its citizens.*

Local government is the order of government closest to citizens. It delivers basic services that people count on every day, including: water and sewer infrastructure, policing, fire protection, local roads, recreation, and community planning. The Provincial Government supports local governments by broadly empowering them to serve their residents effectively through local government legislation, which includes sufficient checks and balances to ensure that local decision-making is open and provides appropriate opportunities for ongoing citizen involvement.

Core Business Area: *Local Government*

Objective 1: *Local governments are open, representative and responsive.*

A representative local government system in which citizens choose their form of governance and the services they receive is consistent with democratic principles.

In 2003, the Province introduced the *Community Charter* (Charter) — a modern legislative framework for municipalities, increasing their autonomy and accountability and allowing them to respond more effectively to their citizens' needs. With the Charter's implementation, British Columbia's relationship with local governments has changed. Rather than focusing on provincial oversight and prescriptive regulation, it now emphasizes local accountability, with the Province acting in an advisory and facilitative capacity.

Strategies:

1. **Promote citizens' access to local governments and build their capacity to participate in local decision-making:** Local governments can be more responsive to community needs when citizens participate actively in the local government system and make use of legislated opportunities for input into local government decision-making.
2. **Assist local governments with incorporations, amalgamations, and boundary extensions:** Municipal incorporations, boundary extensions, and amalgamations can improve local autonomy for citizens who previously lived in unincorporated areas. They also provide for simpler access to services and more focused citizen representation within the broader community.

Objective 2: *Local governments are accountable and make effective use of their legislative powers.*

To meet the changing needs of their communities, local governments in British Columbia require a modern legislative, regulatory, and policy framework that strikes an appropriate balance between broad powers and accountability. The ministry has developed this

framework through the *Community Charter* and provides local governments with expert advice, problem-solving expertise, and best practices tools to guide them in exercising their broad authority.

Strategies:

1. **Provide a modern, empowering legislative, regulatory, and policy framework:** The provincial framework supports greater local government accountability and gives communities sufficient legislative and regulatory flexibility to address the changing needs of their citizens.
2. **Support innovation and the effective use of legislative and regulatory powers:** Fostering local governments' innovation builds their capacity to use their broad powers, provide services efficiently, and govern their communities effectively.
3. **Facilitate constructive relationships:** Building strong, positive, long-term relationships among local governments, and between local governments and First Nations, is essential to ensure that all parties work together on matters of mutual interest.
4. **Develop strong, mutually beneficial partnerships:** Strong, mutually beneficial partnerships among local governments, the federal government, the Union of BC Municipalities, and the Province of British Columbia ensure an inclusive and coordinated approach to local, regional, and provincial issues.

Performance Measures for Goal 1:

Percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit: Local governments in British Columbia borrow money (e.g., for infrastructure investments) through the Municipal Finance Authority. The ministry acts as the equivalent of a bank branch manager, approving local governments' loans on the basis of their fiscal capacity. The liability servicing limit is a key measure of this capacity. It sets out the maximum amount municipalities can spend to service their financial obligations for the year. Measuring the percentage of municipalities operating within this limit demonstrates how well local governments financially plan for their capital requirements, and how well they utilize the different financing options available to them.

Performance Measures	Baseline	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit[1]	97%[2]	>97%	>97%	>97%

[1] Liability servicing limit is equal to 25 per cent of annual own-source municipal revenue. Own-source revenue primarily includes taxes, fees, charges, penalties, fines and investment income.

[2] Based on a two-year average from 2003/04 to 2004/05.

Goal 2: *British Columbians live in resilient, sustainable communities.*

Resilient, sustainable communities are places where citizens can lead healthy, fulfilling, economically secure lives without compromising the social, economic, and environmental needs of future generations.

The ministry provides the legislative, regulatory, and policy framework that enables local governments to plan for the long-term sustainability of their communities. The ministry also develops and administers funding programs for infrastructure projects that enhance the quality of the environment and protect human health.

Core Business Area: *Local Government*

Objective 1: *Planning and infrastructure investments contribute to community sustainability.*

The development of long-term, forward-looking regional strategies equips local governments to plan for, and adjust to, the challenges presented by the demographic changes taking place in their communities.

Local governments are responsible for providing their citizens with safe drinking water and appropriate levels of waste water treatment. Such infrastructure systems can be costly. Major projects often challenge the financial capacity of both large and small local governments. Funding from the provincial and federal governments furthers the Province's efforts to realize improved drinking water quality, and to enhance protection of the environment across British Columbia.

Strategies:

1. **Develop, implement, and manage the water and sewer infrastructure capital funding and infrastructure planning programs:** Providing sustainable water and sewer infrastructure can be financially challenging for local governments. Funding from the Province ensures that British Columbians benefit from safe, reliable, and accessible drinking water and improved waste water systems.
2. **Implement the New Deal for Cities and Communities, with the Union of BC Municipalities, to incorporate integrated sustainable planning practices into local government activities:** Integrated sustainable planning practices ensure that local government infrastructure projects are aligned with federal and provincial objectives for environmental sustainability.
3. **Work with local governments to develop forward-looking regional strategies:** Coordination among municipalities and regional districts on inter-jurisdictional issues promotes integrated approaches to addressing the changing social, economic, environmental, and demographic conditions within British Columbia communities.

4. **Negotiate federal/provincial/local government infrastructure capital grant programs:** Working with federal, provincial, and local government partners to provide effective and efficient funding programs that benefit British Columbians ensures that future capital grant programs reflect provincial and local government priorities and objectives.

Objective 2: *Communities are resilient and able to adapt to change.*

Regional and local conditions are constantly changing. The ministry contributes its expertise and targeted funding initiatives to build local government resiliency and capacity to adapt to changing economic, social, and environmental conditions. Across government, the ministry coordinates and leads responses to issues faced by communities in transition. The ministry also plays a leadership role in monitoring and maintaining the strength and integrity of the local government finance system, recognizing that strong, financially stable local governments have the capability to respond to unforeseen changes in the economic, social, or environmental health of their communities.

Strategies:

1. **Collaborate with local governments and provincial agencies to provide expertise and other support to rural and resource communities in transition:** This support and expertise will help rural communities that traditionally depended on natural resource industries to be resilient, and successfully adapt to changing economic conditions.
2. **Ensure that local governments have the fiscal capacity needed for self-government:** This work is supported through the Small Community Protection Grants and Regional District Basic Grants initiatives, which equip smaller communities to provide effective self-government to their citizens.
3. **Promote targeted support for policing, crime prevention, and community safety:** Traffic Fine Revenue is returned to those communities responsible for policing to support them in financing policing, crime prevention, and community safety.

Performance Measures for Goal 2:

Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality: This measure indicates the number of British Columbians who have access to drinking water that comes from a reliable source and is treated to a level consistent with emerging water quality standards. These standards are applicable to both surface water and groundwater sources. The measure demonstrates the ministry's commitment to enhancing the quality of drinking water in communities throughout British Columbia. The significant increase in population served, anticipated in 2006/07, is due to the completion of the Greater Vancouver Regional District water treatment plant, which will service approximately 50 per cent of the provincial population. Subsequent population targets reflect the number of BC Community

Water Infrastructure projects expected to come online over the three-year life cycle of the program.

Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes: Taxes comprise the majority of municipalities' annual revenue and provide the financial capacity they need to operate effectively, and respond to unforeseen situations as they arise. Tracking the number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current taxes measures the robustness of local tax bases and generally serves as an early indicator of broader economic challenges, since non-payment of a substantial amount (i.e., 10 per cent or more) of local taxes may indicate economic weakness within the community. The targets are based on anticipated future improvements resulting from the ministry's concerted efforts to assist communities, many of which are resource-based, to address their current economic challenges.

Performance Measures	Baseline	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality.	20% of total population served[1]	2,132,000 people with new system 70% of total population served	85,400 people with new system 72% of total population served	64,500 people with new system 73.5% of total population served
Number of municipalities collecting at least 90% of their current year taxes.	137[2]	141	143	145

[1] Current as of December 2005.

[2] This represents 89% of municipalities in British Columbia and is based on a three-year average from 2002/03 to 2004/05.

Goal 3: *Communities effectively meet the social and economic needs of their citizens.*

The social and economic needs of British Columbians vary significantly from community to community. Productive and cooperative working relationships among federal, provincial, and local governments, businesses, and community organizations will help to identify and address these needs, supporting strong, healthy, and economically vibrant communities.

Core Business Area: *Local Government*

Objective 1: *Economically strong regions in British Columbia.*

British Columbia's regions are diverse in size, geography, demographics, and socio-economic status. Given this diversity, it is clear that many different and targeted approaches are required to ensure the economic strength of all regions. This requires cooperation among

federal, provincial, and local governments to best meet citizens' needs throughout British Columbia.

Strategies:

1. **Identify strategies to strengthen regional governance:** Strengthen the capacity of British Columbia communities to work together to provide cost-effective services to citizens and build strong, growing regional economies based on the unique strength of each region.
2. **Promote harmonization of regulatory requirements:** Harmonizing local government and provincial approval processes to improve the competitive nature of British Columbia's economy.

Core Business Area: *Seniors', Women's and Community Services*

Objective 2: *Cooperative approaches to respond to inner-city issues.*

Cooperation among the three orders of government, businesses, community agencies, and communities is critical to addressing inner-city issues such as: poverty, homelessness, unemployment, public safety, addiction, other health issues, and economic revitalization. These issues and challenges have taken decades to become established and require a long-term approach in order to make significant changes.

Urban development agreements are one tool to further the creation of vibrant inner-city communities. A number of communities have expressed interest in working with governments and other partners through a tri-partite urban development process.

Strategies:

1. **Ensure collaboration among partners to address inner-city issues:** These partnerships will provide a larger pool of resources and tools to address inner-city issues. Involvement of the private sector, community partners, and government is essential due to the interdependence of community vitality and business success.
2. **Support the implementation of the 2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitments:** Working with partners, the ministry will support the implementation of the Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement. This will help to ensure that Vancouver's inner-city residents have opportunities to benefit from the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.
3. **Facilitate employment for at-risk youth:** Employing at-risk youth helps to address some of the inner-city issues such as unemployment, homelessness, and addictions. The BladeRunners Program is a work-based training program, which trains youth for construction jobs and provides ongoing support to ensure that participants have acquired marketable skills through training and on-the-job integration, which in turn enhances their long-term employment prospects.

Performance Measures for Goal 3:

Number of new Urban Development Agreements: Urban Development Agreements can be a first step towards addressing inner-city issues. They contribute to healthy and safe inner-cities by coordinating the work of governments and community agencies to address social, health, and economic issues.

Number of BladeRunners participants employed: BladeRunners supports at-risk youth to enter the construction trades and increase their self-reliance, making a positive contribution to the social and economic health of their communities. The number of BladeRunners participants moving into employment is a measure of the program's success. The increase in participants in 2006/07 reflects a plan to expand the program.

Performance Measures	Baseline	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Number of new urban development agreements.	1 (Vancouver Agreement renewed in 2005/06)	1 new	1 new	TBD
Number of BladeRunners participants moving into employment.	78[1]	135[2]	>135	>135

[1] This represents 76 per cent of participants in the program, based on a two-year average from 2003/04 to 2004/05.
[2] Represents 75 per cent of program participants, post the proposed program expansion to 180 participants a year.

Goal 4: *Women are safe from domestic violence.*

Women are more likely than men to be victims of violence committed by someone they know, such as a partner, spouse, acquaintance, relative, or ex-spouse. Domestic violence has a very high personal and economic cost, causes serious health and social problems, and places a heavy burden on those who experience or witness it. Supporting communities to prevent domestic violence and develop educational information is one way to make communities safer for women.

Core Business Area: *Seniors', Women's and Community Services*

Objective 1: *Strengthened community capacity to prevent and respond to domestic violence*

The ministry supports community capacity-building to prevent and respond to domestic violence. This includes providing safe places for women who have experienced violence, as well as working with communities to provide information and prevention strategies with the goal of eliminating domestic violence. Educational resources, publications, and awareness

campaigns help parents, teachers, and the public stop the cycle of violence in the home and community, and shape a safer future for women in British Columbia.

Strategies:

1. **Provide shelter to women and their children leaving abusive relationships:** Transition houses, safe homes, and second-stage housing provide safe places for women and their children leaving abusive relationships.
2. **Provide counselling to women who have experienced domestic violence and their children:** The ministry funds counselling for women who have experienced abuse and children who have witnessed abuse, to help them rebuild their lives and reach their full potential.
3. **Reach out to women at risk:** The ministry funds outreach workers through third party contracts to support women at risk of, or recovering from, domestic violence. These workers connect women to the programs and services they need to live safely in their homes and communities. The ministry also supports community-level violence prevention initiatives.

Performance Measures for Goal 4:

Community capacity to respond to women and their children leaving abusive relationships: The number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services is an important indicator of communities' capacity to respond to domestic violence.

Number of women who received outreach services: This measure is an indicator of communities' ability to connect women to the programs and services they need to live safely in their homes and communities. It includes the number of women and children who are assisted with a service or accompanied to an appointment, and the number of unscheduled counselling/support and crisis calls.

Performance Measures	Baseline	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services (responsive to demand).	11,150[1]	11,800[2]	11,800	11,800
Number of women and their children who received outreach services (responsive to demand).	11,457[3]	20,600[2]	20,600	20,600

[1] Represents a three-year average, from 2002/03 to 2004/05.

[2] Increase due to a one-time increase in funding.

[3] Represents 2004/05, the first year in which the program was running.

Goal 5: *Women have the opportunity to reach their economic potential.*

Providing women with opportunities to reach their highest economic potential benefits women as well as society. For many women it is the road to financial independence and self-reliance. Ensuring that women have opportunities to participate in the economy and take advantage of career opportunities is essential for economically sustainable communities.

Objective 1: *Women have more opportunities to participate in the economy.*

The ministry is committed to promoting and supporting women's participation in the economy in British Columbia. Working with other ministries, provinces, the federal government, non-governmental organizations, and communities, the ministry strives to ensure that the unique needs of women are addressed and integrated into public policy, legislation, programs, and services. The ministry identifies and communicates emerging trends and key issues affecting women to government (and the public), to inform policy development, program direction, and decision-making that affects women.

Strategies:

1. **Design and implement a mentoring program for women entering or re-entering the paid labour force:** The mentoring program will assist women to identify options and explore opportunities to enter the labour force for the first time, or to re-enter it after a long absence. This will increase women's involvement in British Columbia's paid economy.

Performance Measures for Goal 5:

Number of women employed after participating in the mentoring program: This measure will reflect how successfully the program supports women to participate in the paid economy.

Performance Measures	Baseline	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Number of women who enter employment after participating in the mentoring program.	Program designed and implemented, in 2005/06	Establish Baseline	Improve over baseline	Improve over baseline

Goal 6: *Improved social and economic well-being for seniors.*

The ministry supports initiatives designed to ensure seniors have enhanced opportunities to participate in community life and improve their well-being. The ministry provides leadership and builds relationships, and collaborates with and informs other ministries, local, provincial, and federal governments, private sector stakeholders, and community groups about issues affecting seniors. Success in this area depends on the efforts of these many

partners and will be further informed by the recommendations of the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues.

Core Business Area: *Seniors', Women's and Community Services*

Objective 1: *Support to the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues.*

In the fall of 2005, the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues began examining the needs of British Columbia's growing seniors' population. The Council will make recommendations in 2006 on the types of supports and services seniors need to continue being active, healthy participants in society. It will review demographic and socio-economic changes, project an outlook to 2020, and identify pressing needs and opportunities to improve seniors' independence and quality of living.

Strategy:

1. **Lead and coordinate government support for the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues:** The ministry coordinates and works with staff in other ministries to provide support to the Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues as it examines topics such as health, housing, retirement, and quality of life.

Objective 2: *Greater awareness and understanding of issues related to an aging population.*

Understanding the unique needs of an aging population is critical to preparing communities to address issues in areas such as transportation and health care, and to ensure that seniors have access to information about government programs and services.

Strategies:

1. **Build awareness and understanding of issues related to planning for an aging population:** This work will help ensure that all levels of government are prepared to respond to changing needs in areas such as housing, health care, and transportation.
2. **Provide seniors with access to information:** Greater access to information enhances seniors' opportunities to connect with the programs and services they need to continue being active, healthy participants in society.

Performance Measures for Goal 5:

Number of seniors calling the 1-800 Seniors Information Line per month: This measure shows that the information line is being used by British Columbians.

Number of Seniors' Guides distributed: The ministry produces the Seniors' Guide which provides valuable information for seniors and their families. The guide has been very well

received and the ministry will continue to produce the guide and track its distribution. This measure shows that the ministry is providing a useful resource for seniors.

Number of visits per year to the Seniors' website: The ministry will continue to provide information via the Internet to facilitate access to government programs and services for seniors, and their families. The number of people accessing the website is a measure of the usefulness of this initiative.

Performance Measures	Baseline	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target	2008/09 Target
Number of seniors calling the 1-800 line per month.	900[1]	>900	TBD[2]	TBD[2]
Number of Seniors' Guides distributed.	60,000[3]	>60,000	TBD[4]	TBD
Number of visits per year to the Seniors' website.	31,000[5]	>31,000	>31,000	>31,000

[1] Represents the average number of calls per month to the 1-800 Seniors Information Line from its inception in March 2005 to October 2005. Complete 2005/06 data is not available at the time of publication.
[2] Future targets will be set based on an analysis of the data from 2005/06 and 2006/07.
[3] 60,000 Seniors' Guides were produced in 2005. All of these guides were distributed.
[4] Future targets will be set based on analysis of the data from 2006/07.
[5] Represents the number of visits in 2005. Data before 2005 is not available.

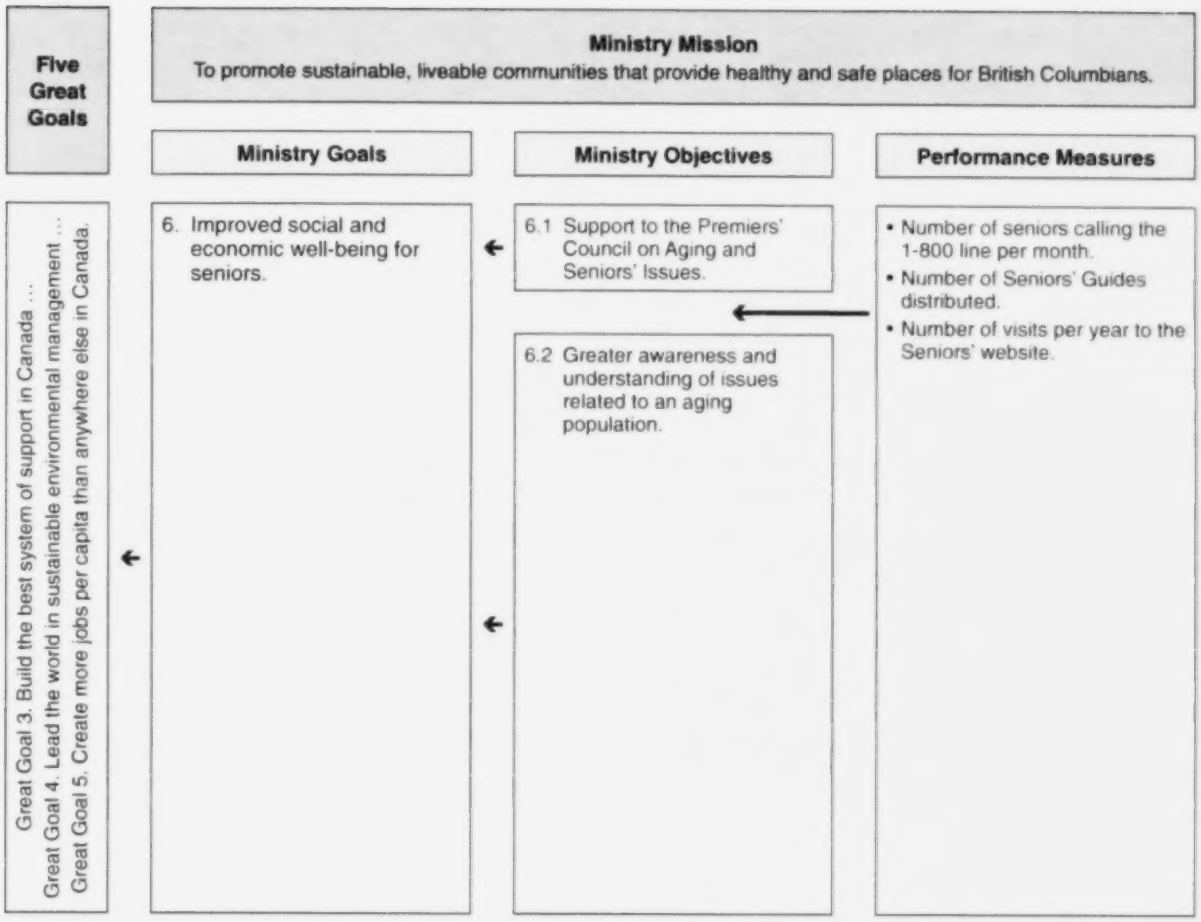
Ministry Performance Plan Summary Table

Five Great Goals

Ministry Mission
To promote sustainable, liveable communities that provide healthy and safe places for British Columbians.

Great Goal 3. Build the best system of support in Canada ...
Great Goal 4. Lead the world in sustainable environmental management ...
Great Goal 5. Create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.

Ministry Goals	Ministry Objectives	Performance Measures
1. Community governance is open, effective and accountable to its citizens.	1.1 Local governments are open, representative, and responsive. 1.2 Local governments are accountable and make effective use of their legislative powers.	• Percentage of municipalities operating within their liability servicing limit.
2. British Columbians live in resilient, sustainable communities.	2.1 Planning and infrastructure investments contribute to community sustainability. 2.2 Communities are resilient and able to adapt to change.	• Number and percentage of British Columbians served by drinking water systems that meet emerging treatment standards for the protection of drinking water quality. • Number of municipalities collecting at least 90 per cent of their current year taxes.
3. Communities effectively meet the social and economic needs of their citizens.	3.1 Economically strong regions in British Columbia. 3.2 Cooperative approaches to respond to inner-city issues.	• Number of new urban development agreements. • Number of BladeRunners participants moving into employment.
4. Women are safe from domestic violence.	4.1 Strengthened community capacity to prevent and respond to domestic violence.	• Number of women and their children sheltered through transition house services. • Number of women and their children who received outreach services.
5. Women have the opportunity to reach their economic potential.	5.1 Women have more opportunities to participate in the economy.	• Number of women who enter employment after participating in the mentoring program.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6. Improved social and economic well-being for seniors.
6.1 Support to the Premiers' Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues.
6.2 Greater awareness and understanding of issues related to an aging population.
• Number of seniors calling the 1-800 line per month.
• Number of Seniors' Guides distributed.
• Number of visits per year to the Seniors' website.

Related Initiatives and Planning Processes

Regulatory Reform

The Ministry of Community Services is committed to maintaining a zero per cent increase in regulation over the next three years. It will do this by ensuring that any proposed new regulatory requirements are assessed against this target and are in keeping with the goals of regulatory reform.

The ministry recognizes that regulatory reform is more than just deregulation. It will continue to review its legislation and regulations, looking for opportunities for streamlining and modernization. The ministry is also involved in a number of cross ministry initiatives that are looking at ways to harmonize and streamline municipal and provincial approval processes.

Over the next three years, the ministry will be undertaking the following regulatory reform reviews:

- Review of regulations under the *Local Government Act*.
- Review of the Province's role in approving local government bylaws and other actions.

Overview of Information Resource Management Plan

The ministry Information Resource Management Plan overview is available on the ministry website at: http://www.cserv.gov.bc.ca/ministry/planning/irmp.pdf.

Citizen-Centred Service Delivery

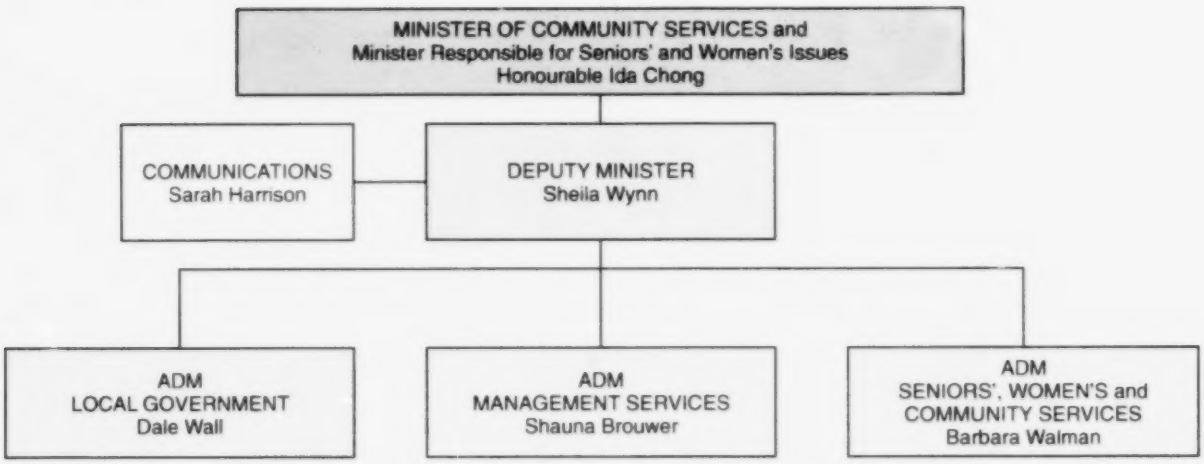
The ministry is committed to providing responsive, quality service to British Columbians. To this end, it provides information, advice, and support to local governments, women and seniors — and to other partners in government on their behalf. The ministry's commitment to citizen-centred service is also affirmed in its values.

The ministry's success in providing client-centred service is reflected in its excellent, long-standing relationships with local governments. It has worked in collaboration with the Union of BC Municipalities to make major legislative changes over the last several years. It also works in partnership with the Union of BC Municipalities and other local government organizations in developing information and best practices (such as the Regulatory Best Practices Guide). In 2006, the ministry will be undertaking a comprehensive survey of its local government clients to determine how municipalities are taking advantage of the new *Community Charter*, and to assess their degree of satisfaction with the ministry's support.

With regard to services for seniors, women and communities, the ministry's domestic violence prevention and intervention services for women are founded on client-centred service principles. The ministry has recently increased funding to enhance transition house services (supporting 24/7 operations) and to provide increased counselling and outreach services for more women. The ministry also supports an online directory for women and the Seniors' Information Line.

Appendix I

Ministry of Community Services



- Local Government Policy and Research Branch
- Governance and Structure Division
  - Local Government Structure Branch
  - Local Government First Nations Relations Section
  - Advisory Services Branch
- Intergovernmental Relations and Planning Division
  - Facilitations Services
  - Planning Programs
  - Intergovernmental Relations
- Local Government Infrastructure and Finance Division
  - Municipal Engineering Service Branch
- University Endowment Lands

Agencies, Boards and Commissions

- Islands Trust
- Municipal Insurance Association of British Columbia
- Premier's Task Force on Community Opportunities

- Corporate Policy and Planning Branch
- Finance and Administrative Services
- Strategic Human Resources Branch
- Information Systems Branch
- Information, Privacy and Records Branch

The Department also provides services to the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts (TSA).

- Seniors' and Women's Policy Branch
- Stopping the Violence Branch
- Community Transition
- Inner-City Partnerships Branch
- Correspondence Unit

Agencies, Boards and Commissions

- Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues

Appendix II

Ministry of Community Services Key Legislation

The ministry is responsible for a number of public Acts, including the following legislation:

Capital Region Water Supply and Sooke Hills Protection Act

Community Charter Act

Community Charter Council Act

Islands Trust Act

Land Title Act — section 219, except subsections (3) (c), (11) (b) and (10) as it relates to the ministry

Local Government Act — except ss. 916 - 919 and 692 - 693

Local Government Grants Act

Local Services Act

Manufactured Home Tax Act

Ministry of Municipal Affairs Act

Mountain Resort Associations Act

Municipal Aid Act

Municipal Finance Authority Act

Nanaimo and Southwest Water Supply Act

Ports Property Tax Act — s. 5

Resort Municipality of Whistler Act

Sechelt Indian Government District Enabling Act — s. 4

University Endowment Land Act — except ss. 2 (1) (a) and (d) and 3 (b)

Vancouver Charter